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HARTLY HOUSE.

VOL. II.

HARTLY HOUSE

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H A I N T H R E E V O L U M E S



15-4-18

LONDON

PRINTED FOR A. DODD, 21, ABINGDON STREET, LONDON, E.C.

M.DCCC.LXXXIX

HARTLY HOUSE,

CALCUTTA.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY, PALL-MALL.

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PART OF C. J. H. H.

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1881

HARTLY HOUSE.

LETTER XIV.

I AM this evening, Arabella, invited to a concert at the Governor's, of gentlemen performers, who, I am told, are masters of the several instruments they undertake to exercise; for it is the common received opinion at Calcutta, in direct opposition to the Chesterfield tener, that Nero himself, if he had not sunk the emperor in the fidler, would have done honour to the imperial diadem by his musical

taste and skill. But it was the pride of his nature alone that was gratified by his performances—his senses were untouched—his soul unharmonized—and enmity and death occupied his thoughts, even in the moment his fingers called forth sounds of delight : whereas, on the contrary, king David, who, as we have it on sacred record, not only played upon, but tuned his voice to his harp, was as great a king, and, with one only exception, as good a king, as any succeeding period can boast ; neither his personal dignity, or his regal reputation, being lessened thereby.

I am going to make a distinction, which I expect you to subscribe to ; and that is, the distinction between dressing to the best advantage,

advantage, in order to do credit to our friends, and doing so for the purpose of gratifying our own vanity. Mrs. Hartly is so proud of her guests, that she proclaims their imaginary, as well as real merits, far and wide: and I am sensible, in consequence of such partial reports, I am expected to be found the standard of fashion and good taste in the article of appearance.

Would it not therefore be to mortify her, and disgrace my father, if I was to fail in all possible and proper attention to my toilet?

I have not this day failed, I assure you; nor is the occasion a common one. The Governor is entitled to our respect, in honour

of the British sovereign, in like manner as (on a court day) the British sovereign and his amiable consort are entitled to the *salams* and superb decorations of those who present themselves at St. James's.—And so much by way of apology for my splendid trappings; for, my dear girl, I have it yet to tell you, that a set of diamond pins from the very mines of Golconda have been given me by my father, and a pair of bracelets of pearl, with gold clasps, studded with small brilliants, by Mrs. Hartly, who declares to me, that whatever I behold of her prosperity originates from the friendly support of my father. I have also a necklace of pearl, of more value than I chuse to mention; and my hair will be decorated, my arms, and

and every part of my visible person, beyond all I can give you an idea of.

But, surprising to relate, Arabella—such is the corrected and confirmed principles of the Gentoo, that, though the diamond merchants travel with all their tempting treasures under their sole convoy, without fire-arms, &c. &c. not one of them has ever been deprived of an atom of his property by this whole people.—What then are we Europeans made of? or how must we appear in their gentle and upright eyes, who have waded through the blood of millions, to bring home gems of inconsiderable value, in comparison to what these travelling merchants are possessed of?—On such

recollection, I am ashamed to know myself a European : nor can it be doubted.

If there are, as some tenets imply, a distinction of heavenly situations, will not this good-minded people occupy the first in rank ; for nearest to the divine attributes of any thing you can have a conception of, is their kind-heartedness and probity.

I have had a harp presented me, and am already complimented upon the delicacy of my finger. It is, you know, an instrument well adapted to this Arcadian climate ; and I have played upon it at Hartly Bungilo by moon-light.—Can I go higher in my description thereof ?

The

The ambition, Arabella, is, who shall have the honour of adorning the top with a wreath, the daily offering of my host of adorers ;— and I wish you could behold the well-dissembled dejection, and the well-dissembled delight, which mark the features of the rejected and approved votary : in a word, it requires very peculiar gifts to believe one's self a mortal.

Apropos of mortality—I have visited the burying grounds, which are to me scenes of melancholy entertainment, from the affectionate fancy displayed in commemorating a departed friend ;

For many a holy text around is strewed ;
and the air of neatness, that proof of unabating attention, which every

where meets the eye, so unlike the crusts of dust which disgrace the labours of the sculptor in that first of royal sepulchres, Westminster abbey, and the astonishing insensibility of the French in this article (for in France, if we except the monuments of their kings, not a stone tells where they lie)—the fairest, the bravest, and the best, are alike unnoticed and unremembered.—Strange and unaccountable circumstance !

You have visited St. Pancras, in the neighbourhood of London ; nay, I recollect we have visited it together, and together interchanged our sensations on the occasion ; for there, as we read it from the hand of the graver, are deposited the sacred and beloved remains of infancy,

fancy, of youth, of maturity, and of age. Alas! Arabella, the Bengal burying grounds (for there are two of them) though they greatly resemble that church-yard in monumental erections, bear a melancholy testimony to the truth of my observations on the short date of existence in this climate.

Born just to bloom and fade,

is the chief intelligence you receive from the abundant memorials of dissolved attachments and lamented relatives.

Obelisks, pagodas, &c. are erected at great expence; and the whole spot is surrounded by as well-turned a walk as those you traverse in Kensington Gardens, and
orna-

ornamented with a double row of aromatic trees, which afford a solemn and beautiful shade: in a word, not old Windsor church-yard, with all its cypress and yews, is in the smallest degree comparable to them: and I quitted them with unspeakable reluctance.

There is no difference between these two grounds, but in the expence of the monuments, which denote that persons of large fortune are there interred, and *vice versa*; whence, in order to preserve this difference in the appearance, the first ranks pay five hundred rupees, the second three hundred, for opening the ground; and they are disjoined merely by a broad road.

I in-

I intreated Mrs. Hartly would lead me to my dear mother's last mansion—she started, and accused herself of the highest indiscretion, in consenting to my viewing a spot that could suggest such an idea to my mind; and so earnestly besought me, as a proof of my affection for her, to return home, and never again attempt to investigate a circumstance, so evidently desired by my father to be kept from my knowledge, that friendship and filial reverence prevailed over every other impulse, and I suffered her to put me into my palanquin without reply.

But palanquins are conveyances ill calculated to remove distressing thoughts; and, during my state of miserable sequestration from all
social

social connection, I would gladly have exchanged places with any friend of yours, that enjoyed only a corner of a hackney-coach and your company. Nor shall I, from what I have this day experienced, ever be reconciled to this *sola* condition, however conformable to the fashion of the country. This letter, my dear girl, will waft a sigh from your

SOPHIA GOLDBORN.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

HAVE I interested your curiosity by my mention of a concert? I can assure you, it well merits your notice and information.

It was performed in a grand hall or saloon, lofty and spacious beyond all I could have conceived. Dryden's *Timotheus* was one of the pieces with which we were presented; the Coronation Anthem, a second; the overture to Artaxerxes, that *chef d'œuvre* of Arne, a third—of all which I was an enchanted auditor: yet were there moments,

moments, Arabella, when a painful pleasure, from the article of your absence, stole upon my heart, and traced out such correspondent lines in my countenance, that Mrs. Hartly (whom nothing escapes) charged me with some soft recollections of England.—“ Why will you not be sincere,” said she, “ with a woman whose heart is in your hand; and confess, what is so apparent, that your affections are not your own? Think you, I am not sufficiently liberal-minded to love those you love, and resign you, though one of the first pleasures of my existence, to the man of your choice?—O wherefore is he an inhabitant of a world I must never hope to behold again?”

Now, who shall say, that love
and

and friendship are not the same?
 —for similar are the sensations of
 the tender regret separation excites,
 and similar the animated delight
 of a re-union : and we shall meet,
 my Arabella—we shall re-enjoy the
 satisfactions distance deprives us
 of; we shall—but all this plaintive
 language is very unoriental, and
 shall be renounced; and more
 especially, as there is no due pro-
 portion between the strength of
 your attachment and mine—for I
 follow the fortunes of my father—
 the hand of destiny has torn me from
 you: whereas you are now, on the
 death of your aunt, perfectly mis-
 tress of yourself, and can, if your
 inclination prompts you, come to
 me with propriety; whereas I could
 not come to you, unaccompanied
 by my only parent, without disho-
 nour—

neur—the dishonour of violating my filial duty. Let me hear from you upon this point; and take care you well acquit yourself, or, on being weighed in the usual balance of even my warmest partiality, you will be found wanting.

The Governor's dress gives you his character at once—unostentatious and sensible. His lady, however, is the great ornament of places of polite resort; for her figure is elegant—her manners lively and engaging—and her whole appearance a model of taste and magnificence.

Envy, malice, and uncharitableness—how do those malign vices blemish and deform that last best work of Heaven, the human mind!

—Perfection itself is not secure from their baneful breath. But I forget, upon this occasion, that there is a spur to their intent at Calcutta, beyond what they can generally plead. A change of Governor would introduce a change in Eastern politics; and numbers blaze forth, that are now unremembered. But, as I have told you before, I am no judge of these matters; and will not, therefore, trust myself on a subject that might mislead me. The heart will, I grant you, have its private decision, and its private election; and what power or fiat, less than divine, shall deprive it of its natural rights?

I foresaw that this concert would produce some great event. My

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C

father

father looked almost as young as his daughter;—a circumstance I premise as an apology for what is to follow. A widow lady with thousands at her feet—a superior offer to every thing my youth and person has procured me—has insinuated, in so many very explicit terms, to Mrs. Hartly, that she is ambitious to make him master of them.

Mrs. Hartly executed her commission with a very grave face, and I laughed; but, I believe, looked chagrined, on my father professing himself much honoured, and that he would wait upon the lady.—Arabella, what do those words imply? that I have lost my father?—Was he not wedded to my mother's memory when in England, when

when whole oceans rolled between him and her hallowed remains? and can he, will he insult—But I have done: we are none of us angels, my dear girl—we are frail, frail mortality.

But should it be possible for so astonishing an event to take place, farewell India, farewell for ever! My father's blessing, his permission to end my days with you, and once, but once, to behold my mother's tomb, is all I will ask: for my grandfather, you know, has left me a sufficient provision; and I will constitute it my sole support. My mind, so little power have I over it, although I write so calmly, is all a chaos.—My father calls for me: I will instantly attend him—receive his commands with firm-

ness, with resignation, nor dare so far to invert the order of things, as to hope or wish he should regulate his conduct by my will and pleasure. He is my father, Arabella; and I have only to forget he was the husband of my mother, to approve all his conduct.

THE trial is over, and you shall judge how I supported it, without one anticipating reflection escaping me.—I found him alone in the garden Veranda, and unusually serious. He rose when I entered—smiled—and looked my father.

“My dear Sophy,” said he, seating both me and himself—“I am this instant returned from a very
affecting

affecting scene." I sighed, and was silent.

"You heard what Mrs. Hartly said last night, and must recollect my reply."—It was the nearest of all remembrances to my heart; but I only bowed in answer.—"The lady," continued he, "has a noble mind"—(I trembled as he spoke, but he was too much taken up with his subject to notice it)—"she deserved every polite attention in return for the high compliment she made me—and all things are settled between us."—"My mother!" exclaimed I, in a scarce articulate voice, and fainted in his arms—A fine piece of heroism, after all my preparation and resolves!—I instantly revived, complained of heat, and begged he would proceed.

"You are sensible, my beloved girl," said he, "how awkward the situation of a young unmarried woman is at Calcutta;—you have declined every overture made you, though some of them deserved a better fate: but your inclinations are your own—I am the friend, not the tyrant of your heart, Sophia; and such I will prove myself."

Ah! sighed that rebellious heart—am I to be the saving consideration for your conduct?

A woman of honour, fortune, and merit," continued he, "is not an offer a man of my time of life could have thought of; and the opportunity of giving my child a protector of her own sex, is an opportunity not to be left unimproved.

proved. She will not return to England without you; and, with a greatness of soul you will respect, has transferred her affections from the father to the child. — Yes, my Sophia, she reveres my sorrows — acknowledges my heart cannot be recalled from the mansions of the dead — asks only my friendship, your friendship, and will prove herself an ornament to her sex. — Our inclinations, I repeat it, will not always obey our voice; whence I shall ever leave my child's unfettered: — but, though we cannot bestow them, we can regulate them at will, and make an act of stern necessity an act of choice, in every thing but delivering up our persons to an unbeloved object. —

I wept aloud, Arabella — embraced

braced my father—besought his pity and his pardon ; and all this without his discovering my motive—for, unconscious of deviating in a single thought from what was excellent and amiable in his own character, it never once occurred to him, that little mean suspicions occupied my breast.

We are to dine with her to-morrow ; and, next to Mrs. Hartly, I have assured my father I will love and revere her : but, from knowing Mrs. Hartly first, she has got possession, said I, of the very next place to my Arabella in my affections, and I do think can never be superseded. My father smiled at my mental etiquette, and left me with a full purse to collect myself at leisure.

Well

Well do I now know my father is incapable of changing:—but beware, Mrs. D——, how you flatter, lest you should deceive yourself; for such a friend, Arabella, as my father, must be dangerous to such a heart as Mrs. D——'s; which, having once loved to the height of revealing its sentiments—of rising superior to the bars of decorum, and the chains of custom—cannot answer for its feelings, or in future hope to restrain them by any human fiat. Yet hopeless love, my father says, where the principles are pure and upright, always subsides into friendship: it may be so; but I would not chuse to adopt Mrs. D——'s example in this instance, however unexceptionable I may find her in every other. Is
 this

this a mark of a narrow or a liberal way of thinking? I will take your word for it, though I cannot my father's: he is no judge in his own cause, and entertains too great an opinion of the force of just sentiments and the authority of reason.

This is an eastern adventure we had not taken into our account;—but all females do not come under our British bard's description,

—She never told her love,

But let concealment, &c. &c.

for who does not know the lines as well as I, the writer of this epistle? and it is impertinent to assume the credit of information we cannot give.

LETTER

I shall

I shall to-morrow morning exchange the soft passion for the subjects I have till now uninterruptedly pursued—my accounts of Calcutta, &c. &c.

Your own
S. G.

This is an eastern adventure we had not taken into our account; but all females do not come under our British bard's description; and we cannot give you an account of the poet's life and works. But let concealment be done; for who does not know the lines as well as I, the writer of this epistle? and it is impertinent to assume the credit of information we cannot give.

I shall
LETTER

LETTER XVI.

WEDDINGS here, Arabella, are very joyous things to all parties; especially, I should suppose, to the padre or clergyman, who frequently receives twenty gold mohrs for his trouble of performing the ceremony. The bride and bridegroom's friends assemble, all elegantly dressed, at one or other of the young couple's nearest relatives, and are most sumptuously entertained; and the congratulatory visits on the occasion put the whole town in motion. It is a festival I have not, however, the smallest desire to treat my friends with;

with ; for, even was my choice fixed, and every obstacle obviated, I should have unconquerable objections to making so public an exhibition of myself on so solemn a change of condition—an idea I cannot say I have in common with my acquaintance ; for I have reason to believe, I am the only person in Calcutta, not even my well-beloved Mrs. Hartly excepted, that has the same idea in this instance—which is entirely the effect of custom.

A very pleasing, because a very singular circumstance, is, that in this country the head gardener is a professed botanist, and of course conversible on every part of creation around him : hence the classes and characters, as well as the beauties,

ties, of those shrubs and flowers that attract my notice most, are my frequent topics of observation and enquiry. And besides the entertainment, the benefit is abundant of having a well-educated person in this capacity; for his judgment is the household land, where the garden is concerned; and you are sure to have your table supplied, and your flower vases furnished with good sense and propriety. Moreover, I can mention ladies, (and myself, Arabella, for one) who, when at a loss for a subject, are enabled, by this gentleman's assistance, to read a lecture on the several articles of which their bouquet is composed. But to be serious, to me it is highly agreeable, let the art or science be what it may, to meet with people of

informa-

information and good address : it is giving you a companion wherever you go, and promoting that disposition for local enjoyment so much recommended by moral writers, and which undeniably forms a large portion of our happiness. Accordingly, I have already learned to distinguish the native and exotic beauties of the parterre, and with no small pleasure (I might say pride, for I certainly have much nationality about me) discover that many English plants and trees, particularly apple-trees, which are hard to rear, and consequently their fruit of great value, are treated with all the attention and tenderness foreign products are honoured with in England.

Besides, do but conceive the advantage

advantage to a man or woman of
 fashion, who has taste without lei-
 sure, and a desire of knowledge
 without the smallest inclination for
 study, to have a liberal-bred offi-
 cer (I may properly call it) of their
 household, capable of qualifying
 them to figure away upon subjects
 that are an honour to human na-
 ture, with whom they can converse
 at will on the most rational and
 delightful topics. If you love
 me, fail not to enforce these con-
 siderations on your wealthy and
 right honourable friends, and at
 least put them in possession of one
 means of shining. Nevertheless,
 my sweet friend, amidst all the
 joys our double seasons yield, the
 following lines frequently occur to
 me; and, if you can feel their truth
 in Britain, conceive how strongly
 they

they must affect my mind in this
all-subduing climate—

Who can un pitying see the flow'ry race,
Shed by the morn, their new-bush'd bloom
 reign
Before the parching beam?

Three of the gentlemen, who so
largely contributed to our enter-
tainment at the concert, are, I find,
theatrical performers; the Patty
and Miss Sycamore of the Maid
of the Mill, the Rosetta and Lu-
cinda of Love in a Village; and
such are their agreeable persons,
that I doubt not but, by the aids
of the toilet, they fill up those fe-
veral parts without dissatisfaction
to either the ear or eye.

I have not yet described to you
the wonders of a desert. Ices,

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Ara-

Arabella, (could you have supposed such a thing?) ices, in the highest perfection, are, in the months of November and December, presented you at Calcutta.— This circumstance of the ice was to me so wonderful, that I was earnest to have it accounted for; and I find, that this temporary luxury is procured from some of the slender inland (if I may so express myself) branches of the Ganges, which are cut out into canals, or flow in rivulets, under various names. A thin plate of ice forming itself thereon, in some of the coldest nights the coldest season affords, is taken from thence with great care, and manufactured for the first tables: nor do some of the tanks or fish-ponds less advance the purposes of elegant accommodation

commodation in this respect, when the evenings are such as you have in April, or the mornings somewhat like your month of October.

At supper last night I drank a glass of excellent London porter, with sensations of recognition you may much better imagine than I can describe. Mrs. Hartly tells me, it is always on the sideboard, for those who like it; but I never before heard it mentioned. We have also small-beer, perry, and cyder, from my native country, and fine spruce-beer, the produce of Bengal; and, having more company than usual, we did not retire until after four o'clock; and I begin almost to think it just, that those who thus continue to have two days in one, should live but

half as long as those people who divide their existence, upon even a fashionable average, between sleep and amusement.

Had Thomson never been in India, how, let me ask you, could he have so admirably described an animal, that, to be known in all its terrors, must be seen?

Lo! the green serpent, from its dark abode,
Which e'en Imagination fears to tread,
At noon forth issuing, gathers up its train
In orbs immense, then, darting out anew,
Seeks the refreshing fount; by which diffus'd,
He throws his folds: and, while with threat'ning
tongue,
And deathful jaws erect, the monster curls
His flaming crest, all other thirst, appall'd,
Or shiv'ring flies, or check'd at distance stands,
Nor dares approach.

To-morrow I am to be presented to Mrs. D——. I feel an awkward-

awkwardness, I know not why; for, from the accounts I have received of her, any other worthy man but my own dear father should have my warmest vote to obtain her. Her fortune, Arabella, is her smallest merit; for she possesses, it seems, much intellectual cultivation, and has an excellent heart;—a *soft* one she has proved it to be. Good night: read not the last two or three lines with attention, that you may not condemn

Your most affectionate,

S. G.

LETTER XVII.

THE visit is over—and, if my father can resist the merits and winning graces of this woman, I will only say, he is more than human.

Ah! Arabella, with what nice attention had she prepared for our reception!—her house is a palace in miniature, and her servants the best-formed and disciplined, if I may so express myself, I have ever yet seen.

I approached her with a somewhat of awe and reserve I could not get the better of; but her counte-

countenance is open as day, and her smile engaging.—“ By permission, Madam,” said my father, with an air of humility I am confident touched her to the soul, “ by your permission I bring my daughter to solicit your friendship; she is prepared to honour you, and your indulgence will soon teach her to love you; and may this first interview be ever remembered by you both with the pleasure it gives to me.”

“ You have deceived me, Sir,” said she.—“ Is this your child, that stands in need of countenance and support?—What may she not command at Calcutta!—She exceeds my utmost expectation.”

“ Sophia,” replied he, “ is a
D 4 good

good girl, Madam, and has continued to lay her father under the greatest obligations; her voyage to India was solely for my sake; she has left friendships behind her that are not easily supplied: it is incumbent upon me, therefore, to procure her every possible compensation."

A polite and animated return was made by the lady to this speech, and perfectly became her; for, as she does not call herself young, she has a licence to speak in terms that would be too assuming for you or me. But I have a discovery to communicate, that alarms me, perhaps, without a cause;—she has a son, Arabella; and, as their heads at Calcutta are full of lovers and husbands, I am more than half
afraid

afraid there is some plot in this sudden acquaintance and friendship.

I watched her eyes with diligence; but her whole demeanor was unexceptionable, and the character of the fair friend finely preserved; but she seems to understand the method of attaching such a man as my father, and, I fear, will reverse the fable of the Turtle and Ring Dove, having got the clue from him to his heart, by making herself as necessary to his peace, as she must be pleasing to his sensibility.

Now, Arabella, am I about to play the woman in a most unworthy degree. I have never beheld Mrs. D——'s son, or even heard of him

him until this visit; yet am I armed, at all points, to refuse an offer I may never receive.—What unpardonable prejudgment! May he not have his mother's graces, his mother's understanding, which is much celebrated?—He may; but take my word for it, he is not the man I shall ever unite myself to; for your made-up matches are, of all things, the most odious to me. Let the man have eyes to chuse me, on whom I am ever prevailed upon to bestow my hand, that I may not suppose the question is coolly canvassed whether I shall be accepted by him, aye or no. I am neither a vain nor an ambitious woman; but I own I am not able to stand the idea of being pointed out by the maternal finger to a booby heir, that would never other-
wife

wife have thought of me. I would not thus be disposed of, even to the Nabob himself. Jerry Blackacre (for so my mind would perversely call this unknown young man) never once, however, made his appearance ; nor did Mamma glance the way I apprehended.—May I find myself alarmed without a cause !

Mrs. D—— is a woman of taste and good education, and has a menagery, as you call it in England, of the feathered tribes peculiar to this country ; beautiful cockatoos, and minhos without number ; lories—but she gave five-and-twenty gold mohrs for three of them ; they are natives of Batavia, and in high esteem here for their articulation : she has also a bird with buff-

(44)
buff-coloured wings and a white breast, of the Bilo species, that has a million of worshippers among the Gentoos, and named by them the Bramine kite.

She has presented me with one of each, if Mrs. Hartly can forgive my introduction of them into her family ; but I am certain, if they prove inconvenient inmates at Calcutta, she will have them accommodated at Hartly bungilo, and my little friends will be kind to them for my sake.

There are, besides the Bramine kite, very many birds that enjoy high privileges ; the Indian raven, for example, (a bird known in Europe by the name of the Rhinoceros bird) which draw themselves
up

up in curious ranks in the most populous streets of this town without interruption, and are called by the sailors Jerry Daw's soldiers.

Mrs. D—— is to return our visit in a few days. I am but a novice in these matters; but it appears very extraordinary to me, that, after what has passed between her and Mrs. Hartly, (and that she cannot flatter herself my father's refusal of her can be a secret, as it speaks herself) she should chuse to mix with such heterogeneous parties: but she carries off the affair with an admirable grace, in which my father assists her in a manner peculiar to himself, and, I believe, without her perception of it. It is well for the world at large,

large, and happy for me, that all his arts are honest ones, and all his frauds pious ; for, had a bad man his endowments, his collected mind, his command of face; who would be able to stand against him?—I will teach myself to be a more dutiful daughter, and less capricious member of the community, that I may merit the partiality I know you feel for

Your's, &c.

S. G.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

NO wonder lawyers return from this country rolling in wealth; their fees are enormous; if you ask a single question on any affair, you pay down your gold mohr, Arabella, (two pounds)! and if he writes a letter of only three lines, twenty-eight rupees (four pounds)! I tremble at the idea of coming into their hands; for what must be the recoveries, to answer such immense charges!—You must, however, be informed, that the number of acting attornies on the court roll is restricted to twelve; who serve an articulated clerkship of three years only, instead of five, as in
 † England.

England. These twelve regular-bred gentlemen, nevertheless, from motives of friendship, or for certain *douceurs* best known to themselves, lend their names, on manifold occasions, to the great extension of practice.

The style of living, if you wish to be deemed genteel, is indeed such as demands an ample revenue; but the custom of the country is so much in favour of improving your fortune at all points, that it is not considered in the smallest degree derogatory for gentlemen of whatever denomination to merchandise, or, as I have already mentioned, to provide lodgings or lodging-houses for the East India Company's servants, who are only temporary residents.

The

The fee for making a will is in proportion to its length, from five gold mohrs upwards; and as to marriage articles, I should imagine they would half ruin a man, and a process at law be the destruction of both parties. A man of abilities and good address in this line, if he has the firmness to resist the fashionable contagion, gambling, need only pass one seven years of his life at Calcutta, to return home in affluent circumstances; but the very nature of their profession leads them into gay connections, and, having for a time complied with the humour of their company from prudential motives, they become tainted, and prosecute their bane from the impulses of inclination.

My father's Schar has obliged me with the introduction of his relation, the young Bramin, at Hartly House. He has not left the Gentoo university at Benares, which is remarkable for its sanctity, above three years. He made us, however, but a very short visit; as it was near our tea-hour, and he could not, by the laws of his religion, partake of any refreshment; but promised by his interpreter to see us again soon. My vanity will not let me suppress one compliment that was paid me by a Moor of great dignity: "Such," said he, "are the daughters of Paradise."—I would have given more than I shall mention to have known my Bramin had distinguished me from the rest of the company; but was not so happy.

We

We will, nevertheless, if you please, talk of him in his absence, or at least of the people to which he belongs.

The Gentoos, Arabella, are divided into five tribes; the first of which is the most highly esteemed, and the only one (like the tribe of Levi among the Jews) from whence the priests are taken: I need not therefore add, it is called Bramins.

The second is the Sittris, whose profession ought to be the military alone; but they are not so strict as the preceding, and frequently engage in other employments.

The third are called the Beisa tribe, which consists chiefly of merchants, bankers, and banias or shop-

keepers; the schars are, I believe, of this tribe.

The fourth are called the Sud-der tribe, who, by their original institution, are the meanest servants; nor can they ever rise higher.

And the fifth are called Atarris, which is a tribe deserted by, and formed of the refuse of, all the others; the travelling palanquin-bearers, the most inferior and laborious of all offices, are taken from thence. And I will in this place inform you, that the travelling palanquins are so constructed, that you repose, as in Revel's machine, on a couch—are served with your loll shrub, or other favourite refreshments—and thus, with incredible

credible expedition, are conveyed to the distance of five hundred, or any other number of miles, up the country; and there is no other mode of travelling by land whatever.

By water, you have bugeros of so large a size as to accommodate whole families; and, being provided with live and other suitable stock to your fortune, &c. you shorten or lengthen your voyage at pleasure, and have your state-room cooled by verandas, as in your own houses. You will therefore perceive, that our pleasures are not so local as might be imagined; and, in these nautical excursions, it is common for several bugeros to set out in company, interchange their visits, and have their little concerts,

as agreeably as may be. A party of this sort is planned for my participation, and I suppose Mrs. D—— will be added to the list: be it so; but, if she would give me a favourable impression of her prudence, she will decline being in the same bugero with my father.

She has, however, told me some interesting things; and I begin to have confidence in her friendship.

Her father and mother were both English, but she was born at Calcutta; they conspired, Arabella, at a tender age, to sacrifice their child for wealth. A marriage (if it could be so called, that was a violence on the heart) was agreed to by them, when Mrs. D—— was only twelve years old, with

a great military character, whose manners were ferocious, and his person deformed. Nine years did he live, the tyrant and the oppressor of all who knew him. A library was the sole support of her spirits, and the sole relaxation she was permitted to enjoy. She bore all without complaint; for she was sensible complaint would be unavailing. Her father and mother were little benefited by their conduct; the man of war forbade them all intercourse with his wife—he would not have her taught the sin of opposition to his will; she was his property, and as such he would guard her from the approach of persons who had, to his knowledge, private views to gratify: and at length, in order to deliver himself from their reproaches, he

E 4 offered

offered them an annuity for life, on condition they resided in England; for England they embarked, without being allowed a parting interview with their child, but were lost in their passage, on the Malabar coast; which piece of news her husband abruptly communicated to her, and laughed at the tears it occasioned her.—“ You could not love them,” said he, “ it is impossible; the matrimonial sale they made of you renders it impossible;—to enrich themselves, they were wholly regardless of your fate; and, had you not married a man of honour, you must have been miserable.” He died, however, at the end of nine years, and she has remained nine years a widow.

Her fortune, it seems, has only a
short

short time been clear of litigation ; and her health, during that whole period, was in a very indifferent state. The first is now ascertained to her utmost satisfaction, and the second happily re-established ; when, unluckily, Arabella, she has created a new grievance for herself, that nothing but her own death, in all probability, can deliver her mind from smarting under.—But I will return to the Gentoos.

The Bramins pretend, that Brumma, who was their legislator both in politics and religion, was inferior only to God. He was, possibly, some great and good genius, that, in like manner with Confucius of the Chinese, regulated their manners, and promoted their happiness ; and is therefore rendered, by gratitude
and

and superstition, the object of their adoration.

The Bramins, however, affirm, that he bequeathed them a book called the Vidam, containing all his doctrines and institutions; and that, though the original is lost, they are still possessed of a commentary upon it, which they name the Shahstah, written in the Sanscrita language; a dead language at this time, and known only to the priests who study it. The foundation of Brumma's doctrine consisted, it is said, in the belief of a Supreme Being, who created a regular gradation of beings, some superior, and some inferior to man;—in the immortality of the soul;—and a future state of rewards and punish-

punishments, to be bestowed and received in a transmigration into different bodies, according to the lives they had led in their pre-existent state. From which it appears most likely, that the Pythagorean metempsychosis took its rise in India;—but that the necessity of inculcating this sublime, but otherwise complicated doctrine, into the lower ranks, induced the priests, who are by no means (the case in most religions under the sun) unanimous in their doctrines, to have recourse to sensible representations of the Deity and his attributes: so that the original doctrines of Brumma have degenerated into downright and ridiculous idolatry, in the worship of divers animals, of a variety of images, and some of the most hideous.

deous figures, either delineated or carved; and they have holidays to the number of twenty annually, in honour of each;—a kind of religious jubilee, during which public processions and festivals take place; which I shall not fail to describe to you on becoming a spectator of them.

All their other pleasures are confined to visiting their pagodas or temples, which are stupendous but disgusting buildings, and to the satisfactions of domestic life; and they assuredly are, as I have already observed to you, the most tranquil and temperate people on earth.—But, besides the tribes I have set before you—their ancient mode of arranging their precedence, and their numbers of casts or classes, divisions

sions of those tribes, I shall have occasion to observe to you hereafter.—Water is their drink ; but such, Arabella, is their strict adherence to what they deem their religious duties, that, though expiring with thirst, they would not taste the water of their sacred rivers, the Indus, called by them *Sindab*, the Kishna, and the Ganges ; the tanks or fish-ponds, fed by the heavens, or by natural springs, being alone their liquor on all occasions. But they never fail to wash themselves in the Ganges, or to oil their bodies, before they break their fast. In a word, their manners are highly interesting, from their simplicity and liberal-mindedness ; and I blush to feel how superior to all that Christianity can boast, of peace and good-will towards men.—But, my
 dear

dear Arabella, I have one caution to give you, which is, not to set me down for a plagiarist, though you should even stumble upon the likeness, verbatim, of my descriptions of the Eastern world in print; or once presume to consider such printed accounts as other than honourable testimonies of my faithful relations: and certain it is, that true and genuine relations of objects and events admit of very little variation of language. This premised, I shall not doubt of informing or entertaining you (and perhaps both the one and the other) in repeated instances; and ill requited be the busy individual that attempts to lessen the consequence, or impeach the originality of my reports,

This

This doctrine of the metempsychosis is to me the religion of humanity; for it is apparent, that no other tenet, temporal or divine, could have so effectually restrained the sons and daughters of this Eastern world from committing the wantonest acts of cruelty towards the brute creation, as the apprehension of being exposed, by the chances of transmigration, to similar evils;—apparent from the marking effect it has on the conduct of the Gentoos, in contradistinction to all other species of natives; for, instead of the arrogance and ferocity daily manifested by the several nations around them, their hearts are softened into a tender concern for the kind treatment of every creature living—a concern

concern which so powerfully regulates their feeling, that, in the very bosom of voluptuousness, they will feed on no delicacies but such as the vegetable kingdom present them with, except the nectareous juices obtainable from animals with relief to themselves, and salubrity to their owners—a very elegant manner, I expect you to allow, of telling you that milk is a favourite article of the Gentoo diet. How unlike the degenerate posterity of Adam

(Of half that live, the butcher and the tomb)

is this order of beings! and how easy the transition into angelic natures!

But enough of the Gentoos for the present, and of every other subject,

ject, except the last and first that
occupies my thoughts, namely, with
what affection I am

Your unalterable friend, &c. &c.

S. G.

LETTER XIX.

PHYSIC, as well as law, is a gold mine to its professors, to work it at will. The medical gentlemen at Calcutta, Arabella, make their visits in palanquins, and receive a gold mohr each patient, for every common attendance—extras are enormous.

Medicines are also rated so high, that it is shocking to think of: in order to soften which public evil as much as possible, an apothecary's shop is opened at the Old Fort, by the Company, in the nature of your London Dispensaries, where drugs are vended upon reasonable terms.

The

The following charges are a specimen of the expences those Europeans incur, who sacrifice to appearances.

An ounce of bark, three rupees, seven and sixpence—an ounce of salts, one rupee, half a crown—a bolus, one rupee—a blister, two rupees, five shillings—and so on in proportion; so that, literally speaking, you may ruin your fortune to preserve your life.

But then, to balance this formidable account, every profession has its amazing advantages: accordingly, as I am told, it is no uncommon thing to clear a hundred and forty per cent. by merchandize, on many European articles, and particularly the ornamental for ladies, and on men's hats.

F 2 .

Moreover,

Moreover, from the high demands at taverns and coffee-houses, you may conclude provisions are brought to market at a high price: on the contrary, even during the time the East-India Company's ships are lying off Calcutta, and so abundantly increase the consumption, six fine ducks are sold for a rupee, two and sixpence. Bread is also good and cheap; fish both excellent and cheap. Likewise, fowls, eggs, and milk, very cheap; butter dear—geese cheap—turkies dear; and, Arabella, half a sheep is often bought for one rupee. Vegetables are plentiful and very fine—the potatoes are better tasted, in my opinion, though much smaller, than in their native soil—we have salads in great quantities, and within every one's purchase—and French beans and green pease, are, I am told,

told, in as high perfection at Christmas, as in the meridian of your summer season, and with this advantage, that they have them in your summer also. Fruit of every kind is delightful—oranges, lemons, limes, pomegranates, ananas, pommelos (which are brought to table stript of their outside coat), plantains, &c. &c. the product of their own soil; with apples, as a rarity, currants, raspberries, &c. &c. from my native country, and raised here with much care and attention. Thus you will perceive wine is the heaviest family article; for, whether it is taken fashionably or medicinally, every lady, even to your humble servant, drinks at least a bottle *per diem*, and the gentlemen four times that quantity—a fine number of twelve and sixpences in the course of the year!

Their domestic animals are the same as in England—and, in like manner with England, dogs of various kinds, and cats, are great favourites—the ladies have also parrots, squirrels, minhos, lories, &c. &c. as pets.

They have elephants, camels, horses (Arabian and Armenian), oxen, buffaloes, sheep, deer, lions, and

Tigers darting fierce

Impetuous on the prey their glance has
doom'd,

as Thomson tells you; with many I have not enabled myself to mention.—Nor must you be uninformed, that to hunt this terrific creature, is one of the polite amusements of the East; on which occasion the gentlemen set forth with all imaginable magnificence, with bands
of

of music, and dogs, and spears, and sometimes give fatal displays of their courage. I am happy to know my father will never make one in such wild parties; for surely there is much more of madness than folly, in thus sporting with their personal safety, and braving the Author of their existence.—I know very well, Arabella, that hunting these rapacious and powerful animals, can boast both ancient and regal origin; but what is wrong in itself, can never be rendered right, because some illustrious brute or blockhead has made it his practice.

The farmers, who supply the Calcutta markets, reside chiefly about creeks and little bays formed by the artificial meanders of the Ganges—and have a Beisar day once a week,

for the sale of their commodities—especially up Tomluek river, as high as eight miles, which, though shallow, is navigable for all Bugaros; and it is fashionable to visit the dairies, &c. &c. in its neighbourhood.

Confectionary shops are kept both by French and English men; but the latter are most approved, and their profits are far from inconsiderable—nor is it unreasonable it should be so, when it is remembered they have their wishes to revisit the country of their birth, in common with their superiors; and are willing to purchase that felicity by dint of toil, in the service of those who choose to employ them: they have large imports in this way, as, I believe, I have already mentioned,
from

from England. You will perceive I am not unobserving or unenquiring. —But to proceed to other matters.

His Majesty's Coronation would have been ushered in with ringing of bells (the constant herald of joy in England) but for one little impediment, viz. Arabella, that there is but one church bell at present in all Calcutta, and that a deep melancholy-toned one, for the sole purpose of telling the public some one of their fellow individuals is no more. All funeral processions are however concealed as much as possible from the sight of the ladies, that the vivacity of their tempers may not be wounded.

Funerals are indeed solemn and affecting things at Calcutta, no hearses being

being here introduced, or hired mourners employed: for, as it often happens in the gay circles, that a friend is dined with one day, and the next in eternity—the feelings are interested, the sensations awful, and the mental question, for the period of interment at least, Which will be to-morrow's victim?—The departed one, of whatever rank, is carried on men's shoulders (like your walking funerals in England) and a procession of gentlemen equally numerous, and respectable from the extent of genteel connexions, following—the well-situated and the worthy being universally esteemed and caressed whilst living, and lamented when dead. The Padra, however, has his ample profits; who performs this last pious act with the greatest propriety: but, such is the elasticity of European

European minds, that, the ensuing day, the tavern is again visited by those very gentlemen, who know, and acknowledge it to have been the bane of their lost friend—excesses of this kind being only suicide in a different form, than the pistol or sword, by which many of my countrymen in England precipitate themselves into the mansion of spirits, with how much confusion of heart and of face, no one has yet been permitted to return and declare;—but they have reason and morality for their guide, and when those are unattended to, it is not probable they would be made sensible of the first law and duty of existence, self-preservation, though one rose from the dead.

As a relieving subject, however, both for you and myself, I will mention

mention to you, on this opportunity, somewhat of christenings:—five gold mohrs is the smallest fee thought of for the Padra's trouble in this instance—with the participation, moreover, of an entertainment that would put a lord-mayor's festival out of countenance: his Reverence must therefore have a fine time of it;—but gold mohrs are dealt about at Calcutta, as half crowns in England; and I leave you to determine with how good a grace a family of fortune or title could offer a clerical man, of respectable character, half a crown for his baptismal benediction.

The Gentoo holidays begin to-morrow—when I suppose I shall have news for you; and you may assure

assure yourself, I shall be on the look out to do you pleasure.

I have seen the opening procession, and am much entertained by it. A certain number of Bramins, dressed after their peculiar manner, with countenances such as Guido would have bestowed on a heavenly saint, led the way, a prodigious multitude of people following, with an idol superbly dressed with silver, gold, pearls, and the richest manufactures—which is carried about from street to street, till sufficiently exhibited, with drums, flutes, &c. &c. to the manifest delight of all parties, and then lodged in one of their pagodas, as a sacred, though temporary

porary deposit ; for it seems, Arabella, that on the last day of these religious raree-shews, all the idols are collected into a body, and, in a kind of pious frenzy, plunged into the Ganges, with thirty or forty persons swimming round them, until the noble act of sinking them to the bottom is effected, when they return with inconceivable satisfaction to their respective homes—and then proper persons are set to work to furnish them with new ones ; the poor deluded creatures endangering their lives, though most expert swimmers ; for the contest is, who shall be the happy one to perform this ceremony, conceiving it the highest honour of mortality to be aiding and assisting in drowning these divine works of their own hands.

It

It is, indeed, one of the grand articles of the Gentoo faith, that the waters of the rivers Ganges, Kifna, and Indus, have the sacred virtue of purifying those who bathe therein, from all pollutions and sins—they are therefore commanded by Brumma, (in his book of pious instructions, the Vidam) to dwell solely in the neighbourhood of some one of them—a tenet that is founded in good policy, by its prohibition of their migrating into distant countries; for it is remarkable, that the sacred rivers are so situated, that there is no part of India where the inhabitants have not an opportunity of freeing themselves from their sins by this mode of purgation;—the Ganges flowing through the kingdom of Bengal—the Kifna dividing the Carnatic

6

from

from Golconda—and the Sindale, or Indus, washing Gugurate, and all the parts bordering upon Persia. —But they do not want any thing from abroad, having neither vanity nor ambition to gratify.

They are subject to early old-age, as I have mentioned on a former occasion; and have so little passion for vigorous exertions, that it is a favourite maxim with them, That it is better to sit than to walk, to lie down than to sit, to sleep than to wake, and that death is best of all.

So soon as these holidays are over, the races will take place, and I am preparing to appear with *eclat* as my father's daughter.—I cost him large sums; but we cannot

not have the purchase without the price; and, I promise you, he has the full credit of his generosity to me.—He calls me his second self—I think he miscalls me, for I verily believe I am the first object of his care and kindness; nay more, that he is attentive to his own health and accommodation, chiefly on my account—and I wish very many young women, more deserving than myself, could say the same.

I have as yet given you only a very inadequate idea of the wealth, the numerous dependents, the power, and the importance of the Company on this commercial spot.—However, before I advance one step further, let me set before you the rapid progress they have made in all these acquisitions.

In the year 1600, their stock consisted of only £. 70,000—they nevertheless had the spirit to fit out four ships, which being successful, their prosperity augmented annually.

East-India stock sold from 360 to 500 per cent. in 1680—and a new Company was established in 1689—the old one re-established, and the two united, in 1700—and they agreed to give Government £. 400,000 a year, for four years, to remain uninterrupted, in 1769.

Such are the prosperous flights of commerce, when wisdom and justice holds the regulating rein;—but there are Phaetons every where; and no wonder, therefore, that this chariot of the sun has had its wheels

wheels taken off at certain periods. Temptation is the fiery ordeal of virtue, and eastern bribes so portable, that it is almost a miracle to escape unhurt in some tender part—our fame or our conscience;—and let him that is qualified stand forth, and prove he is not included under this description of men.

I enquire every day about the arrival of ships, and find many do arrive; whence comes it then, Arabella, that you remember me not?

Mrs. Hartley has looked in upon me, and most severely condemns my close application to my pen.—I shall blind myself, she says, and tear my nerves to pieces.—She

found me not only incorrigible, but I set such good and sufficient reasons before her, for the practice she impeached, that she left me, (having given me the information, that the races commence in three days) confessing it could not be discontinued. In three days, therefore, my dear Arabella, you attend me to the turf, where, if I do not break forth on the public eye with unusual spirit, I greatly fear the celebrity I can now boast, will attain its utmost meridian, and rapidly decline : the preparation is important, and my friends must be consulted in every instance — I therefore beg leave to devote this whole day, at least, to the advancement of so great and necessary a design, without writing another word.

Here

Here you have me again, beyond my own promise or intention, engaged in your service; — but, you must know, I have met with a little surprise of a singular nature — an addition, Arabella, to our usual visitants.—I therefore said not a word respecting my appearance, but waited in quiet expectation of the young man's being announced to me, (as is the custom), previous to every notice I could condescend to take of him.

The morning passed away, and he was not announced! — strange this—but true;—if he is deemed worthy admission to our parties, why should he not have the usual passport to conversation?—But it is

idle for me to mention such a circumstance—and yet, as he appeared a stranger, and has a face of promise (for it is only doing him justice to say, understanding and good-nature are apparent in his countenance), I must think it wrong to leave me in my awkward situation respecting him.—If Mrs. Hartly thinks I shall make him of so much consequence as to enquire after him, she is mistaken; for I am too well aware of the inference, as it is the first thing of the kind that could be charged upon me.—I will order my palanquin, and steal a visit to the children I so much admire—their kind and innocent endearments will be doubly agreeable to me, now that I am in an absolute fit of dis humour with myself, and all the world—you, Arabella, alone excepted ;

excepted ; my father, on this occasion, having shewn no more attention to my feelings, than the rest of my friends in this house.

So said, and so done—for, Arabella, before a single creature had an idea of such a thing, was I arrived at Hartly Bungilo, and as happy as a princess. Mrs. Rider, the children's *gouvernante*, received me in a most pleasing manner ; and I, for the first time, had leisure to observe a custom, with which I am delighted—it is the compliment paid to my country, in the taste at Calcutta in statuary ; for, instead of Neptune, his lady wife, and whole train of aquatic attendants, saluting your eye, out of their natural element, these

Bungilo gardens are adorned by a Thomson, a Johnson, &c. &c.; in a word, all the literary characters, to which the British empire has given birth; and a very useful effect those objects have upon the mind—for, by a natural and instantaneous combination of ideas, the Seasons were opened on my view; with Rasselas and his friends I traversed the Ethiopian regions; and so of the rest: nor did I ever, until that moment, know the fund of literary knowledge I am mistress of: and the utility must be general to the beholders;—for in youth it excites enquiry, in maturity, recollection: and it is my fixt and firm resolve, whenever I revisit England, (a nabobess, you will observe) to constitute my gardens an equal source of entertainment and instruction

instruction to all who are permitted to frequent them.——Mrs. Rider, perceiving how enthusiastic I was become, (for I absolutely answered her kind and polite questions in heroics) said she was tempted to shew me Mrs. Hartly's closet. —“Your visits, Madam,” continued she, “have been so short, that I conceived there was not time to introduce you, where you would doubtless wish to spend some hours—for it is a cabinet of no less elegant than rational curiosities, and I have the honour to be trusted with the key, for the purpose of improving the minds of my young pupils, as occasion requires, with little lectures upon its contents.”—I was impatient to be admitted; and the obliging Mrs. Rider led the way, without further preface or preparation.

I will

I will never forgive Mrs. Hartly, for so long keeping me unacquainted with this proof of her fine taste, liberality of temper, admirable judgment, and elegant mode of spending her leisure time. The walls are covered with a pink paper from China, of the softest tint, as a ground to the portraits arranged around.—Here, Arabella, the poor Marchioness of Tavistock, from the hands of one of your first artists, sheds her unavailing tears, the tears of conjugal affection, and wounded peace, never more to be healed on this side the mansions of eternity. And here also the lovely and royal victim of female ambition, is drawn in her state of disconsolation, robbed of her crown, her fame, her children, of all that is dear and estimable in existence, except

except her beauty—but that is pourtrayed in a style of languor and softness, that relieves the feelings, by intimating her sufferings are near their termination.—Ah! my Arabella, who lost more, or had more to lose, than this sweet child of sorrow—transplanted from the nursery to a throne, and surrounded by dangers, against which she had never been taught to guard—the malign dangers of self-interest in a high-reaching and daring breast!—But I shall take an opportunity of speaking more largely on the subject, as also of giving you the names of the other fair and amiable personages, selected by my distinguishing friend from all others, to ornament and embellish this invaluable apartment. One more, however,

however, I must place before you
—a whole length; a highly-finished
piece—inscribed, Arabella, thus,

“ Whose nice discernment, Virgil-like, is such,
“ Never to say too little, or too much.”

The drapery is well executed, the
attitude happily chosen, the like-
ness masterly; the commentary on
the *Genius of Shakespear*, which lies
on a table in the back ground, a
very pleasing termination of the
whole.

I own, I feel myself proud,
when my mind tells me this lady
is my countrywoman; for to her
literary endowments are super-
added gifts, that bespeak her one
of the first favourites of Heaven
— a heart replete with benevo-
lence, and a hand prompt to be-
stow;

flow; in a word, she is an equal honour and blessing to the age in which she lives.

Mrs. Rider hinted to me (with great deference) that I should make my friends uneasy by my elopement; and, my father having a right to my unremitting attention, however I might choose to fancy he neglected me, I hesitated not to return;—where I found the family in amazement, and the young gentleman seemed to have adopted their feelings. I laughed the matter off with a good grace, and, professing myself infinitely obliged to Mrs. Rider, for her entertainment of me, retired, and was not again visible till supper.

At supper the races was the universal

versal topic—and I find English
 jockies are well rewarded, if they
 visit Calcutta. There will be a ball
 on the evening of the first day,
 given by the Company, at the Court-
 house, to which all the Company's
 servants are entitled to free admis-
 sion. So that, at least, there will be
 men enough; and, as the weather is
 remarkably favourable, fine sport is
 expected. Thus, you find, we Asi-
 atics can contrive to vary our plea-
 sures; and must be the envy of the
 European ladies, were they to read,
 that we of Calcutta live only to be
 adored, and that our gentlemen ask
 no higher happiness than permission
 to pay us their unending adoration.
 —You shall hear of me again in a
 few hours—at five o'clock in the
 afternoon we take our phaetons.—
 The race-ground is three miles in
 circuit,

circuit, and, I imagine, is found a laborious heat in this country, for once round is all that is attempted. — But I will not prejudge an exhibition, of which I shall so soon become a glad spectator: — the horses are bred and attended at a great expence, as with you in England. — But I have done — adieu.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

Four in the morning.

I Am so delighted, and so fatigued—have so much to communicate, but, unlike your heroines in romance, am so unable to keep myself awake—that the moment my musketto curtains are ready, I must slide into repose; and may the dreams of the morning only equal the pleasures of the evening, and I shall not, except in your absence, have a wish ungratified.

I promised to address you again on paper, yesterday; but I

little foresaw what business was in store for me.—Mrs. D——, as I imagined, goes with us, and came last night, at a late hour, to solicit Mr. Hartly's company in her phaeton—I looked at my father—who, turning to Mrs. Hartly, said, “I hope you understand, Madam, that I rely upon the honour of being your attendant beau on every public pleasurable occasion.”—Mrs. Hartly bowed, and smiled assent.

There sat the stranger speechless, though animated—and, until I had refused several gay offers, spoke not; when, in a half whisper, the spirit at length moved him to ask, if he might aspire—and a look of meaning was left to finish the sentence.

My father said he should be most happy, and Mrs. Hartly was warm in his commendation—I, therefore, could not decline an offer, I nevertheless scarcely knew how to accept, as he remained the John in the cloud, every body is deemed until they are introduced.

Having opened his mouth for the first time, in my presence, with success, he began to take a part in the conversation; and I soon discovered two things—yes, Arabella, two, unless I am greatly deceived, namely, that he is a well-bred youth, and not without the secret desire of becoming one of my most obedient humble servants.—But my obedient humble servants are already so numerous, that I do not believe I have room for one more
upon

upon the list.—I nevertheless think you would plead in his behalf, if you was to see him: he is—so in fact like yourself in his person, has so agreeable a voice, so happy a manner, and fifty other valuable accomplishments, that, was I in a land where love was of longer duration before it terminates in matrimony, I will not say but I might be in some danger of listening to him;—but such is the custom at Calcutta, that, before I shall be certain my affections are really engaged, or that I am likely to be able to prevail on myself to fix for life, he will be snapped up, if he has brought an unengaged heart among us, (which is to me, however, a doubtful point) by some female or other, who regulates both her feelings and her conduct by the esta-

blished standard. I shall, therefore, enter into nothing more than a very slight acquaintance with him.—But the races, perhaps, you ask—when are you to hear of the races?

In the first place, Arabella, allow me to tell you, (for it is a proper prelude to what follows) not a phaeton on the turf was more noticed than mine—my horses are Armenian, well trained and bitted—my reins elegant—my own dress becoming—the dress of my Seapoys magnificent—my attendant beau the envy of the men, and the admiration of the women;—and could any happiness be more complete than mine?

My father, however, played the
 (subject) H ? renegade,

renegade, and exchanged his place in the phaeton, with a gentleman on horseback :—he generally kept near us—his eyes, what paternal approbation did they not sparkle with! though he seemed to forbid their saying too much; and my beau had a dignity in his visible satisfaction, that proved him to be of European birth and education—of taste and sentiment. For, however little he said, he was to me the best male companion I have met with at Calcutta, the Governor and Mr. Hartly excepted.

The spectators were numerous—many of which were Moors; and observe, Arabella, (though that piece of information is in no degree connected with my present

subject) that the Moors of Indostan, often called Mongols, are of the faith of Omar, the Turkish Mahometans of the faith of Hali.

The horses were led to the starting chair, four in number; and the jockies, distinguished by the colour of their turbans, prepared themselves for the word of command—the word, Arabella, was given, and they went off full speed—my eyes followed them, not wholly impartially, for my father had declared his wishes, and his wishes were adopted by me. Our favourite was the successful adventurer; but, between ourselves, such are the disadvantages of climate, that one good English post-horse would infallibly have borne off the prize.—We were refreshed

at

at the Governor's, in our return, with tea, coffee, &c. and from thence went home to sleep, and to adorn ourselves for the ball.

Now do not suspect me of mind-
ing such a thing, for I only men-
tion it for its singularity—for to
me it was beyond measure singular,
that the handsome insensible I had
honoured so abundantly, in the face
of all my admirers, should not
have the politeness to ask the fa-
vour of my hand for the evening
—insomuch that I resolved, if he
attempted it on my appearing in
the ball-room, I would refuse him.

Note, Arabella, if you take it
in your head to wish to know
the dresses of the company, either
male or female, I shall refer you

to the fashions in England in their highest and most expensive state of ornament and decoration. For, except in the article of mourning, (which is chiefly the beautiful cassimires, which are the produce and manufactures of the East) there is little difference between the appearance of a fine lady at Bengal, and a fine lady in London—for fine ladies in London have found out the elegance of enwrapping themselves in shawls; and those treasures of the mine, and of the ocean, diamonds and pearls, are well known in England, though not in such profusion; for those displayed at the ball-room would, moderately speaking, have purchased half a dozen principalities.

I can, however, at length justify

fy the propriety of Doyly's behaviour (the name of my new acquaintance) from finding he knew, though I did not, the etiquette of balls at Calcutta; for you must know the Eastern ladies, in order to preserve the peace and good order of society, as well as to promote the felicity of the evening, never dance above two country dances with one and the same gentleman—accordingly, you will perceive, had Doyly taken advantage of my want of information, the trees of destruction would, the ensuing morn, have been witness to the bloodshed, of which I should have been the innocent, he the guilty cause.

The youth, however, kept close to my father the whole evening,

ing, (on which account, I doubt not, it was that I was taken in a soft moment) when, with a diffidence and respect the Eastern air will soon cure him of, he besought the honour of going down *one* dance with me—though, on recollection, he did not arrive at this high point of courage, until my father had sanctioned his presumption by one of his speaking smiles. He approached me, bowed, and bowed again—when, (could you have supposed it?) my hand, without the concurrence of my heart, was delivered up to him, and he had conducted me to my seat, before I was sensible of my breach of resolution respecting him.

In short, my sweet friend, if nabobism was not the stumbling-block

block of my ambition, and flattery here the daily incense of the sex, there is no saying what might happen; for Doyly's flattery is of a most insinuating kind — his eyes are full of expression, and the language of good sense flows from his lips; — but, I have a vow, that stares my conscience in the face, on the bare mention of Doyly's winning talents — and it is well I have: for, instead of the ceremony of appointing a distant day, and all the dangling visits paid in consequence thereof, you are liable, at Calcutta, to be plundered of your consent any evening of your life; and, without time to collect yourself, much less to retract — by the Padra's being one of the company, may be induced to give him a claim to twenty gold mohrs, before

fore he takes his leave ; and so, my good Arabella, being married in haste, be left to repent at leisure.

The only remedy for which evil is, that, instead of the mortification so often experienced in England, on the matrimonial disenchantment, you have innumerable methods of filling up your time agreeably, and are not less beloved by the world, for loving your husband no longer.

After what I have already written of magnificent entertainments, it must be unnecessary to mention, that our supper and sideboard were magnificent.

The ball-room, at the Court-house,

house, is spacious, and finely illuminated—the attendance princely—and the ladies angels.

Amongst the rest young Edwin bow'd,
But never talk'd of love :

of which picture, Edmund Doyly is the original, as you will discover in the course of my epistles.

Watson's Works, a place for building bugeros and small sloops, (the road to which lies across the esplanade, to the river, in an oblique direction) is some miles from Calcutta—and to Watson's Works, in order to see the launching of a large bugero, built on a new construction, we repaired yesterday, after taking our tea; and do
but

but conceive the *eclat* of half a dozen, or more, of these Eastern barges, all freighted with elegant parties, gliding down the stream together, the oars beating time to the notes of the clarinets and oboes.

Music has charms, says the poet, to soothe a savage breast—what power must it then have over a humanised one, and especially in an elegant bugero! — the heavens the most glorious canopy I ever beheld, and the surface of the water crystalline beyond all imagination—the zephyrs!—but I will trust myself with no further description of it, for there is fascination in the recollection of the scene—nor have you any thing in England

England to help you to the faintest idea of it.

Doyly must, moreover, be brought into the fore-ground—his person is so pastoral, and his sensibility so oriental—had he the Mogul's diadem, he would place it, I am confident, upon my head, and, though entitled to all the privileges of a Mussulman, live for me alone.

But, poor youth! he has, it seems, his fortune to make; and most precarious, of course, are his prospects of advancement; the arrow of disease, can impede the accomplishment of the best-conceived designs, arrest the arm of skill, and bring on almost instantaneous dissolution.—I enter, Arabella, into all his delicacies—

noisy and troublesome in his compliments, and so abundantly did he warm with his subject, that, regardless of all danger, he advanced to the unrail'd part, and insisted upon the honour of kissing my fair hand. I was not inclined to comply; for though the rowers are dexterous, I could not help apprehending it would bring the bugeros too close together for our perfect safety:—the company were, however, of a different opinion; and, ashamed to persist in fears that were peculiar to myself, I leaned forward, supported by poor Doyly, to gratify him—when, to the equal surprize and offence of the whole party, he attempted to salute me. Fired at this boldness, Doyly repulsed him with indignation, and in the same instant

Vol. II. I was

was pulled overboard—and your valiant friend most opportunely fainted away.

He fell not, however, unrevenged — for the Bacchanalian, a man of large fortune, had his arm somehow entangled, so that they went soufe together, and were both fished up by the dexterous Gentoos, (the water being, as it were, from their diurnal immersions, their natural element) before I was restored to life.

I looked anxiously around me, and, from my then feelings, should certainly have relapsed, if I had not beheld my half-drowned champion at a distance. The company, as soon as it appeared no real harm had been done, very sensibly interposed,

interposed, and a general reconciliation succeeded.

Mr. Doyly having changed his dress, joined us at supper.—“I think, Sophia,” said my father, when he entered the saloon, “I have not heard you thank this knight for his stroke of Quixotism in your defence—he was near paying very dear for it—What reward, my young friend, shall we bestow upon you?”

“The honour,” replied the gallant Doyly, “of kissing the hand I preserved from outrage.”

I could not forbear telling him, so unusual was his vivacity, on this honour being granted him, that he appeared much benefited by his

plunge into the holy river—the waters of the Ganges being affirmed by the Gentoos to possess, as I have already mentioned, wonderful virtues.

I expect horrible visions, in consequence of an incident, that has however gone off with astonishing happiness to all parties—for let me not attempt to sleep, until I inform you, that at one o'clock, a chit-bearing arrived post with a letter to Doyly, consisting only of these words : —“ If the enclosed is accepted, I shall then, and then only, have the courage to behold Miss and Mr. Goldsborne again.” And the peace-offering, Arabella, was no less than an appointment to a private secretaryship, he had instantly obtained him; an introduction, of
all

all others, the most promising for making a fortune. And may every promise it is fraught with be fulfilled, though I should never live to know it !

You may be sure this handsome action met with due commendation—and Mr. Hartly said, that if Mrs. D—— would permit him to choose for her, Mr. M. should be the man : for, as an antidote to intoxication, he must observe, that when he was sober, his heart was liberal, and his manners pleasing. I felt for Mrs. D——; but I might have spared my feelings—she received Mr. Hartly's speech with great good-humour, as a friendly jest—and begged he would give her leave to choose for herself. Doyly is much pleased with this lady; and

the fact is, she wins unspeakably on the approbation of us all—and, in every thing but one, I sincerely wish her merit may be rewarded.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

MRS. D—— has new merit in my sight: our phaetons drew up close to each other on the race-ground, and we had chatted together for a few minutes, when a young fellow, superbly mounted, saluted her with his hat, and asked where he should find her son—she directed him to a distant spot, where I perceived a youth with a plain person, but apparently well satisfied with himself, that put a period to all my nonsensical apprehensions, for he could not be much more than fifteen: an age so unsuitable to mine, as to be alone sufficient security against my father's

forming the design I had suspected.

“Is that gentleman your son,” said I, “Madam?” with an emotion that marked, I am afraid, a rather uncivil surprise. “It is Mr. D——’s son,” replied she, “and as such I acknowledge him—for though his father, on some trifling offence, forgot he was his child, by the fortune he left me, I shall always conceive myself bound to provide for him.”—Perceiving I was about to compliment her upon so generous a way of thinking, she added, “there are duties,” my dear young lady, “I need not inform you, which it is a reproach to us not to comply with, though no positive institution.—I am only the agent of Providence in this business—

business—and should ill deserve the blessings I enjoy (she sighed, Arabella, as if some blessing, nevertheless, was unattained) if I forgot his orphan claims to my protection.”

If this is not greatness of soul, it is something vastly like it, according to my ideas. What claims could this child have to Mrs. D——’s favour—when his father was the enemy of her peace, and the tyrant of her existence? It is a sweet feature in her character, and shall be revered by me.

Doyly’s eyes sparkled with approbation, whilst she uttered the words I have written for your perusal; and I shall only observe upon the occasion, the different conduct

conduct of the world, in different instances — for, had Mrs. D—— acted as thousands would have done, towards this miserable-looking boy, the story of her unkindness would have been in every one's mouth — and they would have doubled her fortune in their report, for the pleasure of doubling her guilt. But when her liberality of mind has so honourably displayed itself, even at Calcutta no one was found forward, on the mention of her name, to give her such well-earned praise.

The gentlemen pronounced this day's sport much superior to yesterday's; but I cannot say I discovered any such thing: however, Arabella, I discovered, what gave me great concern, that with the
amusement

amusement of the turf, the spirit of betting has been imported at Bengal, and the madness is, who shall be first undone.

We passed the night a second time at the Court-house; but the ball was a compliment of the Governor's, and well conducted:—and thus our races ended.

The next amusement is the theatre—which would have opened sooner, but from some necessary repairs in the scenery, which were not known to be wanting, until it was too late to accomplish them in the desired time.

My Bramin has been here this morning, and shakes his head at the gay life I lead;—and, to own

the truth to you, Arabella, I am not quite clear, but I have at this moment the seeds of some alarming disease about me:—may you never experience the misery of unstrung nerves! or your charming spirits become the victim of burning suns, or baneful dews!—My heart dies within me, from the apprehension of what my dear father will suffer, if the mementos of my mortality, which now hang about me, should increase. Shattered constitutions, expiring friends, last adieus, and melancholy regrets, I cannot tell wherefore, wholly occupy my thoughts—it may be only fatigue; or, perhaps, this letter will contain the ultimate levities of my pen. Be assured, however, I shall depart, if my hour is now come, in the true faith of an European—
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the faith confirmed by all around me—that there is no climate more salubrious than Britain—no people more blessed—no days more pleasurable, or nights more tranquil, than her temperate air bestows.—Farewell, my Arabella!—Rapid is the progress of disease in India. I now have just sufficient remaining strength to bid you farewell—and it is not improbable, that by this hour to-morrow morning I may be in eternity.

Farewell !

I must write on while I have the power.—Mrs. Hartly, as is her never-failing kind custom, opened my door to wish me a good night. I exerted myself to the utmost,
that

that the repose of her and her family might not be interrupted—it will be time enough in the morning, to make my friends wretched.

Friendly attachments, Arabella, are great obstacles to piety: the passage to eternity is, I grant you, an awful one; but the thoughts, I am convinced, linger on temporal ground, much more from the ties of affection, than the dread of our future condition. Those whose lives have been upright, and who have, in repeated instances, been the care of Providence, dare not doubt of blessedness hereafter; and those who have a just sense of the efficacy of repentance, will have confidence therein,

therein, and, of course, due resignation.

My father! how will he learn to survive me? O could I recall my error in one respect, a most intolerable weight would be taken off my heart. Doyly I can point out a comforter for, and a successor in his tenderness; a sister of Mrs. Hartly's, who, with twenty times my mental merit, is every way my superior in person also; but I am well aware it will be some time before the young man will behold her with my eyes. My father, my dearest father! (wicked creature as I have been) who shall comfort him?—I grow worse and worse, and must, I fear, submit to medical regulation.

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

HOW fortunate it is for us both, that the East-India packets arrive not every day; for my last letter would have wounded your mind, without any benefit to me.—But I will tell you all that has happened, in my usual narrative manner.

Doyly, I am told, has behaved himself very well during my illness, which, Arabella, was short, but most severe, and has left me so totally emaciated, that this is the first time, for three weeks, that I have been able to resume my pen. He waited whole hours in
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an anti-chamber, for the purpose of enabling himself to worry my physicians with enquiries how I went on ; which is considered as a high compliment to the patient : and passed his nights in supporting my father. Thank Heaven, I am restored to their wishes, and that Hartly-House is delivered from an absolute nuisance of friendly salams, on my account.

My dear Mrs. D——, (for dear I shall evermore hold her) from a knowledge of Mrs. Hartly's condition, which rendered her unfit for so fatiguing a task, was my regulating nurse. "O fly, Madam," said I to her, when she first presented herself, "fly ; this is assuredly the chamber of death!"

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"I would not knowingly rush upon destruction," said she, "or hazard my life in a common cause—but I love you better than a life of dishonour, which mine would be, if I forsook my friend in her hour of need:—commit yourself, therefore, as an obligation I will ever acknowledge, to my care and kindness, and know this is not the first service of friendship I have successfully engaged in—Is it not a double life I am anxious to preserve?"

"O Madam," cried I, "are we alone?"—"We are," replied Mrs. D——: "then, if you can divest yourself of apprehensions from my breath, kneel by me, and compose my mind by one solemn promise."—"I kneel, Miss Goldborne,"

borne," said she, "in the presence of him, I trust, will preserve you, and pledge myself to perform whatever you ask of me, if in my power."—
 "My father, Madam, if he survives me, will you be the sustaining friend of my father?—O dearest Madam, I deserve your hate—your severest displeasure, instead of the affection you bear me;—for I have dreaded an event, as an evil, that will alone enable me to die in peace.—Wedded to my mother's memory, his heart is for ever in her coffin—and in this state has he been left hours, by the girl, whose felicity was his sole object, to tender melancholy and unavailing lamentation.—What dire enemy of his peace and mine, suggested the idea to me, that it was meritorious in him to be miserable, and filial

virtue in me to rejoice in his misery !”—“ You must not agitate yourself, in this manner,” said the amiable Mrs. D——: “nor shall you be dissembled with on this occasion ;—doubt not my good-will to relieve your father’s mind ; for, perhaps, that good-will has great share in my present conduct. Perhaps, Sophia, all amiable as you are, you would never have been dear to my heart, had you not been Mr. Goldsborne’s child. Be composed, therefore, and rest assured, that Providence will not forsake so worthy a man—he will be consoled, though both you and I were no more.”

“Let me have pen and ink,” said I, eagerly, “before my reason is impaired—I will write but three

three

three words, and you shall then do as you please by me:" a pen and ink was brought me by a poor Gentoo girl I had been kind to, who weeping, took Mrs. D——'s place at my bedside, to give me her best assistance. I wrote as follows,

" Pardon, dear Sir, pardon your child, who, with the prospect of danger before her, is most solicitous for your welfare.—You are alone in the world, and who shall administer consolation to you when I am no more? The blessed spirit of my mother (if the dead are conscious of the actions of the living) is interested in the cause I have at heart:—prove your resignation to Heaven, by withdrawing your affections from the ashes of her you

have so long survived, and make atonement for the worst sin of my life (wishing an union between you and the only woman on earth capable of soothing your sorrows, might never take place): and reconcile me, dearest Sir, to myself, by promising me you will solicit her acceptance of you;—and be, in my last moment, what I have ever found you, the kindest of fathers to Sophia Goldsborn.”

“Take this,” said I, to the poor Gentoo girl, “take it instantly to my father, and tell him I shall not sleep, until I receive his answer.”

She flew back, with these words, hastily inscribed with a pencil:

“Sleep,

“Sleep, my beloved child, thy afflicted father conjures thee to sleep in peace:—he will observe your request, he will religiously observe it, as he would a voice from Heaven. But if you wish him happiness, endeavour to live; for his happiness most essentially depends upon the life of his Sophia—who, living or dead, shall regulate his future conduct by her wishes.”

Mrs. D—— was a silent spectator of this scene, and appeared alone anxious for my composure:—she gave me my medicines with her own hand; and for eight and forty hours my condition was deemed hopeless—a crisis then took place—and I will exhaust my strength no more on this occasion,

for have I not told you I am restored?

Mrs. Hartly and Doyly have oppressed Mrs. D—— with thanks—my father has alone thanked her, in the happiness he displays on my recovery—I feel for her a daughter's tenderness, a daughter's gratitude, and look forward with rapture to the period, that will give me the name also—for, Arabella, if preserving my life (which, under Providence, she has done) at the hazard of her own, is not a maternal act, I know not what deserves that name;—and I will love her, dearly love her, for her mental resemblance of her

—— whose worth and charms
Must never more return.

I cannot

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I cannot write longer at present,

So adieu!

S. G.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

But love, the disturber of high and of low.

MY father and Mrs. D——, without speaking a single word to each other on the subject, are certain, from the train into which I have brought things, of their intentions. But Doyly, though he dances round me on my recovery, with ardent delight, breathes not a syllable to me of the state of his affections, or the colour of his wishes :—teizing creature! I will, Arabella, think (that is, write) no more of him.

You have heard of alligators, (a pretty contrast for the gentle Doyly !)

ly!) and their depredations—but it seems, unless you throw yourself in their way, in their natural element, the human species have nothing to fear from them, whilst living.

But when the Gentoos, as is one of their pious customs, lay their dead (or, what is more shocking, their dying friends) at low-water mark, that the flowing tide of the sacred Ganges may bury, and purify them from all their sins—the alligators make, together with vultures, and other animals of prey, their feast on them.

The tide, in general, does its office—but not till after the above-described circumstance has taken place—

place—a nuisance, and outrage upon the feelings, I wonder the police do not correct—for besides the appearance, so dreadful to humanity, of mangled limbs and headless trunks, which are daily seen by all who pass that way, impurities must impregnate the air, to augment its native putridity at certain periods, and endanger the lives of the inhabitants of this place.

This disposition of the dead, is a practice confined to a certain number of casts or classes only—for there are other casts, as you may read in the European newspapers, that burn the bodies of their departed friends or relatives, and preserve their ashes with great piety. And of this number are those wives, who,
with

with a degree of heroism, that, if properly directed, would do honour to the female world, make an affectionate and voluntary sacrifice of themselves upon the funeral pile of their departed husbands:—it is true, there have been instances of their shewing reluctance—but those instances seldom occur.

No bride ever decked herself out with more alacrity or elegance, than the women about to give this last great proof of their conjugal attachment — and they are, no doubt, sanctified to all intents and purposes by the priest's fiat, and pass immediately into the presence of Brumma, to receive their reward. This mode of sacrifice, is, however, attended with

with much expence, or human bonfires would be unending exhibitions; and hence the custom, it is presumable, of burying them in the water;—and so eager are they to obtain this sacred purification, for those who are past recovery (and, by the way, their superstition forbids their trying the means, in many instances, for their recovery, under the idea of opposing the will of Providence) that they are conveyed with all imaginable piety, and often with their own consent, to the banks of the river, and there fitted, by its rising waves, for their translation from earth to heaven.

You have also read of the barbarous exhibition of men, suspended from heights, by hooks

run

run through the fleshy part of their shoulders, and stuck on machines barbed with spikes:—these acts are acts of choice, in order to restore a poor excommunicated wretch to the privileges of his cast, or class—for, on flagrant misbehaviour, they are excluded, such as eating forbidden things, or other similar breaches of their religious duties. And those who survive this display of what they will do and suffer to atone for their faults, are reinstated in all their forfeited claims, and their sins are not only forgiven, but forgotten for ever.

I asked my Bramin, on his making me his congratulation on my recovery, to tell me what transigrations (according to the best of his opinion) would have been my fate,

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if

if I had died, as was expected, in my illness.—He smiled—blushed, I think—and gave me to understand, that I should never have lost the power of pleasing, because I have not exercised that power unworthily in my human shape.—“I suppose then,” said I, “I may conclude, from your complaisance, that I should have figured away as a cockatoo, or sung myself into somebody’s good graces in the form of a minho—or, perhaps, have been honoured with the person (if I may so call it) of a Bramine kite.”—He shook his head, and made me believe it very probable, that, as I had so long been worshipped as a lady, I might be favoured with divine honours, when I commenced one of the feathered race.—I am amused by
 these

these little fallies—for well does my Bramin know, I respect his religious tenets, though I do not subscribe to them; and can never think myself entitled to laugh at any faith that is seriously adopted, and piously adhered to.

I, in the conclusion, however, told him, that, unless I lost my consciousness with my form, I should be happy to know myself under his protection—for I really think so highly of you, said I, that you are deemed by me, one of the kindest of the kind people to which you belong. He promised me to observe every *lovely* creature, (that was his word) if he survived me, in order to accomplish my wish, and render himself happy by being useful to me.

Doyly absented himself suddenly this morning—the dinner and tea have passed away, and no Mr. Doyly :—it is very well—but if he supposes these unaccounted-for withdrawals are the way to try my heart, he will soon discover he is mistaken.

I find, to speak the truth, no principles so steady, or manners so uniform, in all India, as Mrs. D——'s. She has subdued pride, vanity, and affectation, or she could not be the woman she is. And, from the happy effects of my indisposition, I shall ever rejoice in the recollection of it; for it was the only means on earth of opening my

my eyes to my duty, or of teaching my heart to perform it.

Doyly, with a face of despair, presented himself at supper. And was rallied, I thought (notwithstanding all my private wrath) unopportunately, upon having been an absentee, contrary to his usual custom.—His reply died on his lips, and I did not dare to meet his eyes, from misgivings of which I could not divine the cause.

What, Arabella, can have befallen him?—Has some nabobess made overtures to him, he is compelled from pre-engagement to decline?—Can he be sentenced to forego the height of heaven, and toil out his existence in the dia-

mond mines?—Has he blighted his little rising prospects at the gaming-table, that bane of prosperity to thousands?—O Doyly, softly let me speak it—could my fortune repair the breaches in your's, how immediately, if I was mistress of it, should peace be restored to your breast! And fatal experience, your own natural good-nature and good sense, would secure you in future from falling.—In vain did I seek to read the cause of his sorrows, in both his own and my father's countenance; I am retired to my chamber, agitated by conjectures.—Surely, common friendship might have induced them to deliver me from the pangs of suspense, and the creations of a disturbed imagination.—Mrs. Hartly taps at my door—she will relieve me

me from doubts that torture me,
and fears that threaten I know not
what.

The only misfortune I was un-
suspicious of, has befallen me.—
Doyly sails for Europe to-morrow,
with some important dispatches,
which, from the nature of his new
appointment, are entrusted to his
care.

Alas, Arabella, who shall here-
after venture to say an event is
prosperous! when that most ap-
parently so, thus proves, in the
person of poor Doyly, the cause of
his greatest mortification. The ho-
nour, or the danger, of his voyage,
which shall I teach my mind to dwell
upon?—I can anticipate, though

I cannot follow, your advice.—But what says Shakespear, that great master of human nature ?

Let no one judge of love but those who feel it.

Beware then, my dear girl ! how you dictate decisively in a case, that never was, and perhaps never can be your own.

What medicine can soften the bosom's keen smart,

What Lethe can banish the pain ?

Good night,—I will no longer expose myself.

He breakfasted with us, and my father desired Mrs. Hartly to tell me to bid him adieu, on his embarkation

embarkation for England—But what adieu can I bid the poor fellow, that will not betray my tenderness for him?—His looks, during the whole period we were together, spoke a language my heart too well understood.—Youth of my best approbation!—companion of my pleasantest hours! whose congenial taste and sentiment has afforded me so much delight!—worthy young man!—farewell!—for ever farewell!—Tell my Arabella all my imputed consequence—paint your own partial estimate of my little merits in their strongest colourings—tell her I possess wealth, fame, admiration—every thing that is desirable, but—happiness—and that I alone labour to support existence, for the repose of my father.—This was, however,

my mental soliloquy, not my address.—I shall alarm you, Arabella, by this avowal of my regret, but censure me not, even in your most private thoughts. A friend of either sex, at Calcutta, that is a native of England, and of English education, who can be grave without solemnity, and gay without levity, is a treasure beyond all Golconda can bestow. I will, however, shake off this ill-timed softness, and learn to submit myself with a good grace to all the changes and chances of my destiny;—but we can bear our wants much better than our losses, which is a cutting, because an applicable remark on my own situation.—Our last hour, however, is not yet come, for he will drink tea with us.

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He is gone, Arabella—and silence was the only language of adieu between us. He eat not—he drank not—he sighed not—but suddenly looking on his watch, and finding he must depart—he kissed both Mrs. Hartly's hands, touched one of mine, barely touched it, with his lips, and left us—never more, perhaps, to return!

The good-natured Mrs. Hartly's eyes were suffused by tears. "There is not," said she, "his equal, for his age, in all the East. He has all the promise about him of being a great man; but for my part, well as I wish him, I could not have prevailed upon myself to advise him, as your father did, to cross

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the ocean, and deprive us of his agreeable society."

Every thing but this I supported with fortitude—but the mention of my father's name, as the author of my distress—there was no concealing my feelings!—"And, did my father, Madam"—I stopped, sensible of my error. Mrs. Hartly, however, as perfectly understood me, as if I had wrote a volume upon the occasion—and said every soothing, every possible word, that benevolence and friendship could suggest—and led me to my apartment.—My best prayers, Arabella, will attend him, but I will mention him no more.

Your's,

S. G.

LETTER

LETTER XXIV.

MY Bramin—how sweet is religion, as described by him!—the love of the Deity, and the love of our fellow-creatures, its fundamentals—and peace and charity the superstructure.

For love, this young priest affirms, refines the sentiment, softens the sensibility, expands our natural virtues, extinguishes every idea of jealousy or competitorship, and unites all created beings in one great chain of affection and friendship.

“So far,” replied I, “so far, my good Sir, for the happy side of the prospect;—but what cure have you

for the wounds your sensibility must receive by the dissolution of the tenderest ties of friendship, the survival of your dearest connections?"

"We resolve every event," said the amiable Bramin, "into the divine appointment, and dare not repine."

"This is very delightful doctrine in theory, Sir," returned I.—"And salutary in practice, Madam," replied he, "as the man before you is a living testimony;—for that he was born a Bramin, he submits to, as the will of Heaven—and that you are the loveliest of women, he acknowledges with pious resignation."

I was astonished—Mrs. Hartly
was

was silent—and the Bramin retired, with more emotion than quite accorded with his corrected temper, as if he felt he had said too much.

Wretch that I am, Arabella! this confession, which I shall ever remember with pain, did I, in the idle gaiety of my heart, ardently aspire after.—O, how I lament, that young men and women (with few exceptions, I am afraid) cannot form a friendship of the tranquil and liberal kind, a friendship that ends not in an exclusion of all other attachments, I mean as to precedence!—A life of voluntary celibacy, an unsocial state, which nature revolts at, is the life of a Bramin—for the joys of conversation surpass all other joys, they
are

are the peculiar blessing of the human race. And you find, Arabella, the mental claims are the same in all—for, that I am a conversible being, is the attraction with this Gentoo devotee. — I therefore at length see, and subscribe to, the wisdom of confining their amusements to their pagodas, and their public shews; for they have hearts made for society, and, having once tasted the pleasures social intercourse gives, must pass their days in secretly condemning, what they openly profess to approve, the misconceived tenets of Brumma — for I am clear, the wonderful and enchanting gift of speech was not bestowed upon us, to be sons and daughters of solitude.

Doyly's

Doyly's departure has only been a prelude to the loss of our Governor, and every creature is plunged into disconsolation. Not a bugero will be unoccupied—it is the last proof of their heart-felt respect they can shew him; and you may judge of the preparation, when I tell you, it is an absolute voyage they have resolved upon, to do him honour.

The Company, it is affirmed by those who appear well informed, will, by this event, be deprived of a faithful and able servant; the poor, of a compassionate and generous friend; the genteel circles, of their best ornament; and Hartly House of a revered guest.

He

He has three times, it seems, stood forth, in his late public station, the worthy character I found him—and his plans of government have procured him the repeated thanks and plaudits of the Company.—But,

Envy will merit, as its shade, pursue.

A more uniform good man, or so competent a judge of the advantages of the people, he will not leave behind him; nor possibly can a successor be transmitted, of equal information and abilities. For, Arabella, he has made himself master of the Persian language, that key to the knowledge of all that ought to constitute the British conduct in India, or can truly advance the British interests.—But I
am

am getting upon political ground; and will only add, as the friends of this gentleman observe, that, as the sun is often obscured, without lessening its brightness, so the clouds, which have so unaccountably gathered around his fame, *may* I say, (*will* they say) be one day universally and ultimately dispelled.

The whole place is engaged in adieus, and Mrs. H—— will be accompanied to England (for the Governor sails in a different ship) by a Mrs. M——, who has been presented with 500 gold mohrs (a thousand pounds) in return for her complaisance in making the voyage with her. Two black girls, and a steward, are Mrs. H——'s attendants; and the state cabin and

round-house will be entirely devoted to her use.

My father wishes me to make one in Mrs. D——'s bugero; but I think it impossible I can comply with that wish—so recently as poor Doyley has quitted us, and so distressing as all bidding adieu is to the feelings of your

S. G.

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

IT is over, and we behold our Governor no more.—He would have taken leave of his friends at Diamond Point, but they would not hear of such a thing—their bugeros were well stored with provisions, and every requisite, &c. so with pendants flying, and bands of music, to the last man and instrument to be found in Calcutta, they attended him to Sawger, the extremity of the river.

He was, moreover, saluted by nineteen guns from every Indian man at Bengal, and the general voice, in all quarters, continues

to be, they ne'er shall look upon his like again.

They returned not, Arabella, until they beheld the packet and Indiaman sail out of soundings; in the former of which was the Governor, and in the latter his wife: and then slowly, and with solemn music, made for Diamond Point, where palanquins, to an incredible number, were in waiting to convey them to their respective homes.

I passed the period of their absence at Hartly Bungilo — my father not only consenting to my declining the party, from a hint of Mrs. Hartly's, that the fatigue would be too much for me, but laying his injunctions upon me, not to think of going;—and Mrs.

Rider,

Rider, and the children, were unremitting in their endeavours to amuse me, and keep up my spirits.

But I found time for meditation; and the result is, that I shudder at the narrowness and illiberality of my past conduct—For what but narrowness and illiberality of heart, could for a moment have incited me to suppose, that my father's union with an amiable and accomplished woman, would weaken his affection for me, or throw his conjugal faith and tenderness into shade?

O Arabella, Arabella, admirably does Rochefoucault distinguish, when he affirms, “that there is much more of self-love, than love
for

for the object, in jealousy;”—for, if we love truly (I am now convinced) in the character of either husband, wife, child, or friend, the *happiness* of those we love will infallibly be the first-rate consideration with us;—and that I was not aware of the benefits that must accrue, from having an assisting and relieving partner in the business of promoting my father's tranquillity, is a crime of my nature I will not easily pardon.

I intreat you will be very particular in transmitting me all that passes in your interview with poor Doyly: this request originates solely from common good wishes towards him—for would it not be an impeachment of the friendship I bear his *friends*, to be unmindful

of his fate?—not that I bar your
conclusions, be they what they
may, so you only do me the justice
to believe I am,

Your's, most affectionately,

S. G.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.



